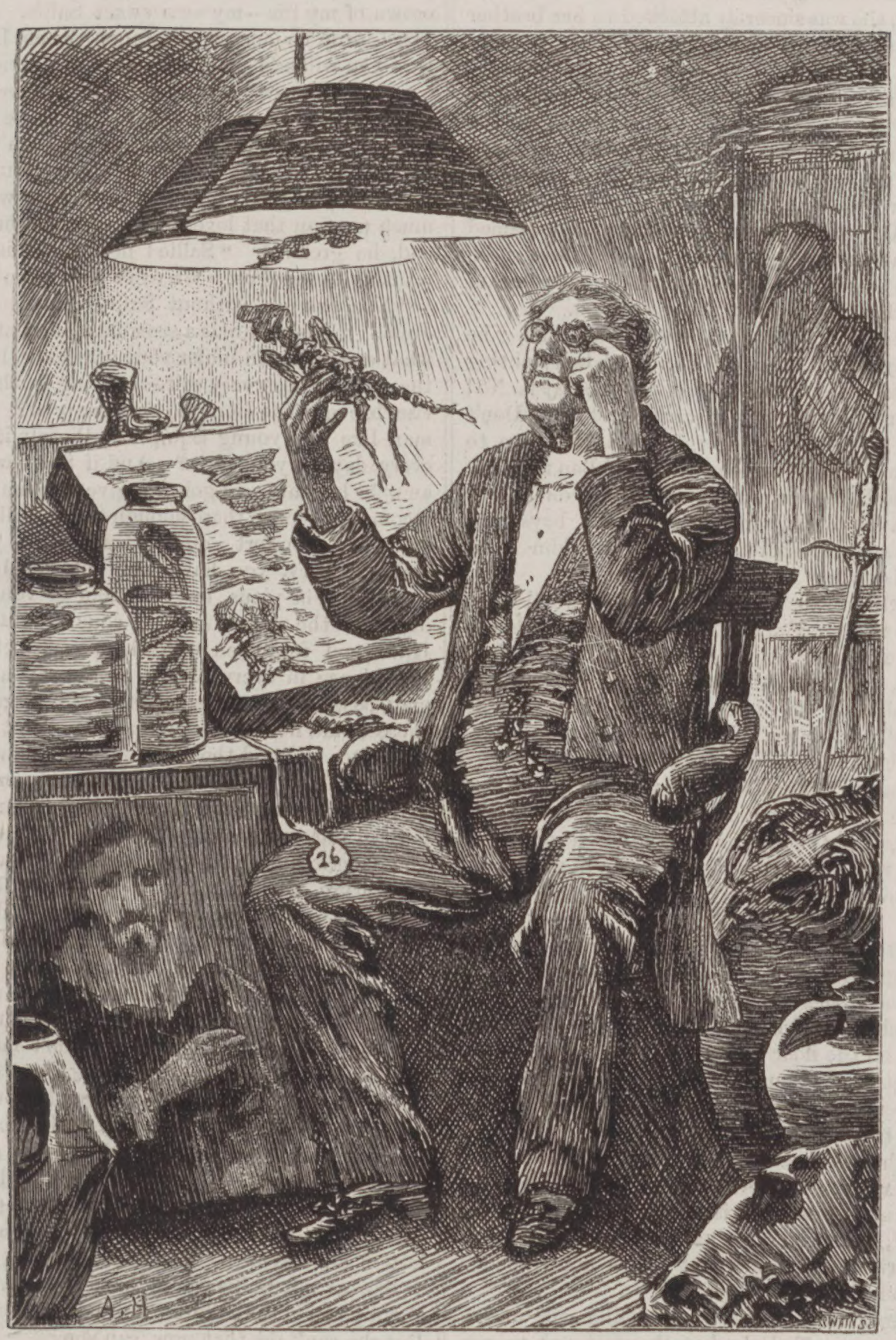
SALLIE'S BOY.

BY JESSIE M. E. SAXBY,

Author of "Dora Coyne," "Lindeman Brothers," etc.



Mr. Linton's "Den."

CHAPTER III.

"POOR RIVALS IN A LOSING GAME."

AUNT JULIA arrived at the identical minute by herself appointed. She was accompanied by many boxes, a cage containing a grey parrot, and a basket, within which was cozily ensconced a Russian cat and three kittens.

There followed her the same evening a feather bed, arm-chair, and old-fashioned bureau, and when these were seen the Lintons knew that Aunt Julia had really and truly carried out her oft-threatened scheme of making their house her home.

Long before, when she was in sorrow and alone, her brother had offered her the shelter of his dwelling. He had told her then that *whenever* she chose to come she should be

welcomed, and Miss Linton had never lost sight of his proposal.

Let the truth be known regarding Aunt Julia at once. Though fond of interfering in other folks' affairs, though prone to domineer, she was sincerely attached to her brother and his children, and believed that she could be of service in their household.

"They all want setting to rights, and I'm the person to do it," she had said to herself. So she let her cottage-villa, dismissed her servant, and arrived at Oaklea as I have stated.

The household received her in subdued spirits, for the household felt her to be a calamity from which there was now no escape. Only blind Roger and little Ben seemed equal to the occasion, and gave the Dragon affectionate greeting, which she took from her favourite as a matter of course, but from Ben she accepted with suspicion.

"What's come to the spoilt baby?" she asked Sallie; "he was never so ready to bid me welcome. Ah! he's wanting to be after my pets! Don't touch that basket, boy! No! the cage is too precious for *you* to carry upstairs. Don't touch my things. I tell you, Roger, my dear, you are to have your choice of Tabby's kittens. And, if Ben is really good, and means to behave himself, he shall have one, too."

"Thank you, Aunt Julia," replied both the boys, and Sallie gave Benjie's hand a secret squeeze to let him know she appreciated his civility to the Dragon.

For a few days Sallie's tact kept things smooth, and there was no explosion, though Fairly and Clara affirmed that a valcano was on the eve of "irrupting." Mr. Linton retired within his studies, assured that his eldest daughter would manage Aunt Julia as she did every other body, and he would be spared all annoyance. But that was not to be.

A week after the Dragon's advent she uncremoniously walked into her brother's "den," where he was busy classifying some plants. She held an open letter in her hand, and she plumped down into a big chair opposite the one he occupied, unaware that she was crushing a rare zoophite in so doing.

"Gracious, Julia!" he gasped. "You have sat down on a treasure!"

"Bother your treasures!" she exclaimed, half rising, and sweeping the fragments from the seat. "What are your trumpery shells and withered leaves in comparison with the welfare of your children, I should like to know? There! leave the rubbish on the floor for once" (the poor naturalist had stooped to gather the remains which she had scattered), "and give your best attention—your *best* attention, Robert—to what I have to say."

Mr. Linton sighed and sank back in his chair, and the Dragon, holding up the letter in her hand, said—"This came by the morning post. It is addressed—observe—to 'Miss Linton.' *I*, of course, open all letters so addressed; but on perusing this one I found that it was not intended for me, but for your daughter Sallie."

"Yes? A natural mistake, perhaps. Sallie will understand, and excuse you. Talk to *her* about it, not to me. I'm busy, Julia; and I don't care to be bothered about trifles."

"This is no trifle, and you must listen to what I have to tell you, Robert. The letter is short, but to the point, and you must hear it;" and in spite of Mr. Linton's feeble remonstrances, the Dragon read Sallie's letter to him. It was from Hubert Holmes, and he wrote——

"I cannot be put off with 'bide a wee' any longer, my darling. I know you love me well, as I love you, and I now beg you to allow me to speak to your father on the subject of my fondest hopes. I cannot live at the Manor any longer without you. I think your reasons for deferring our engagement and marriage are no longer plausible since your aunt has come to reside at Oaklea. Surely she can take your place as mistress of your father's house, and give me the crown of my life—my own sweet Sallie. I shall call upon Mr. Linton to-morrow afternoon, when I hope and believe that you will add your persuasions to mine, for *now* I must have a final answer. I cannot wait longer, dearest. I have been patient a long time, but it must be *now or never*. I appeal to your true, loving heart, as I am yours devotedly,

"HUBERT HOLMES."

Mr. Linton gazed blankly at his sister while she read with much unction that loverly appeal, and when she came to an end, he groaned. "Sallie! not *Sallie* in love, not Sallie wanting to leave us. We can't do without Sallie!"

"You *can* do without Sallie, and you *must*," snapped Julia. "The Squire is a sensible man, that's plain. *I* knew what was going on under your very nose, Robert; and really the girl has been very self-sacrificing in this matter. What else brought me here, do you suppose? Do you think a man like the young Squire of Wately is to be picked up every day by your girls? And if Sallie were to refuse such an offer how are *you* going to give her compensation? Your income isn't more than enough to keep all those children in moderate comfort, and, what with your 'treasures' and trumpery, you have put nothing by for your girls. Is it right, or pious, or Christian of you to put any hindrance in the way of settling your daughter so well for life? Have you forgotten what happened before? There is a Providence in everything, I always say, and *my* misfortune may be Sallie's fortune. If things had gone right with *me* there would not have been a maiden Aunt Julia to come and look after you and the children, and relieve Sallie from her responsibilities, as Mr. Holmes sensibly suggests.

"Do you want to see a second lover hanging about till he is tired out and goes to the dogs in disgust? Robert, is you daughter to do as your sister did—sacrifice love, hope, the future, her betrothed, to—to—Oh, Robert, forgive me, I did not mean to be hard in what I said. I know it was right, and I don't repent. I don't indeed, though I suffered so much. As for John Maxwell, as like as not he'd have gone wrong if I *had* married him, though he always said I was to blame for his ruin. There is a Providence in everything; but, for goodness sake, Robert, don't let a Providence be made of *Sallie's* love affair."

The Dragon stopped there, partly for want of breath, partly because emotion was playing havoc with her articulation; and as soon as she gave Mr. Linton a chance to speak, he exclaimed, "God forbid that I should let any selfish consideration stand in the way of Sallie's happiness."

"It was a special Providence that directed *me* to open *all* letters addressed to 'Miss Linton,'" said the Dragon, "for as like as not Sallie would have got qualms of conscience about you and the children, and have said 'no' to the Squire. But she can't do that now, can she?"

"Yes, no, no—oh no, I suppose!—Sallie must be—considered, and since she—cares for Holmes—I suppose it must be as—as he wishes."

Mr. Linton pulled the bell rope at his elbow, and when a maid appeared he said, "Ask your mistress to come here, Jane."

All unknowing of the volcano begun to irrupt, Sallie appeared in the "den," smiling, and asking, "Is it the zoophites this time, father? Oh, Aunt Julia, you among the treasures and trumpery! But—is anything the matter? Why, what——" and then her glance fell on Hubert's letter;

she recognised the writing, and a deep flush came to her face as she looked from aunt to father in mute inquiry.

Mr. Linton was not in the habit of spending much thought on his children, nor did he often contemplate with paternal pride their beauties of mind or person, but Aunt Julia's vehement words had roused him in no ordinary degree, and when Sallie stood before him, blushing and beautiful, he suddenly realised in her his chief treasure, beside which the rarest specimen in his possession was as trash! With a thrill of exquisite pain he at that moment knew her as the centre of his home-life, the indispensable bond which held the household links together, without which he could scarcely imagine the family getting along at all.

"Sallie, my child," and his voice trembled, "by a—well, natural mistake—your aunt opened a letter intended for you this morning. It is an—important letter, my dear. Will you read it here, and—let us talk of—its contents?"

Sallie stood very erect, with her lips firmly shut, but her eyes flashing indignantly while the Dragon handed over Hubert's letter, saying, as she did so, "You should let your correspondents know that you are only Miss *Sallie* Linton, and I hope you won't be long even *that*, my dear."

The girl made no reply. She was too angry to speak, but she dutifully read the letter at once as her father had desired, and when she had done so she asked him, "What do you wish me to say, father?"

"It is true, my child, that you—love Holmes?"

"Yes, I do," she answered, quietly.

"And you have been putting him off, so to speak, because you thought you couldn't—couldn't leave us?"

"Yes, father."

"My child, it was very good of you, that."

A long pause, which Aunt Julia broke by saying, "We've been talking this over, Sallie. *I* have thought of it for a long time, and we have decided for you. I shall take charge of my brother's house, and his motherless children, and you shall go and be happy at Wately Manor with Mr. Hubert Holmes."

"Father," Sallie began, and then stopped and let her glance follow his, which had risen to the picture of his wife hanging over the chair occupied by Aunt Julia. Sallie was in a flash of thought transported to her mother's death-chamber, and was receiving from her mother's hands the baby Ben. She was hearing her mother say in a solemn whisper, "You will take my place, Sallie."

"Oh, father, I—I can't leave you all; I wish——"

"'Now or never,' that's what *he* writes," remarked the Dragon in warning tones, and Sallie's proud head dropped on her bosom as she heard them.

CHAPTER IV.

"DEMAND NOT THOU A MARRIAGE LAY."

IT was all settled ere long—settled before Sallie had time to reconsider the matter; and the news of her engagement was proclaimed to the whole household by Aunt Julia, who did not spare to mention, at the same time, that henceforth *she* was to be the mistress of Oaklea.

No one seemed very jubilant over the news. Miss Thatcher, the long-suffering governess, held up her hands in dire dismay, and cook snorted ominously. Roy strove to give cheerful expression to his good wishes, but signally failed, and abruptly took himself off to the woods, leaving Sallie in tears over his strangled sentences. The girls kissed her solemnly, but said never a word, an omission fully made up by Fairly, who exclaimed, "I can't congratulate you, Sal. I can't be a hypocrite and say I'm glad, for I am very much the reverse. I call it a horrid, sneaking thing of Holmes to come poking about here, worming his way into the very heart of the house to extract the essence of the establishment for his own delectation. I know *I* shan't stay long at Oaklea after you leave it, so there!"

"Fairly, how can you be so unkind," Sallie faltered, and then a quiet little voice spoke from behind her chair, "Mam-lee won't be far away. I can see the turrets of Wately Manor from my room window." She drew Ben to her arms, kissed him passionately, and then fled away from them all to wrestle once more with herself.

I am sorry to record that the struggle ended in another victory for the young Squire. Sallie's nature was a very strong and warm one, and Love had made himself master of it. She accepted Auut Julia's worldly-wise advice, and wilfully closed her heart to the appeals of duty. "I can still be of use to them, and it will be *one* off father's hands," she argued with herself. "And I don't believe Aunt Julia could have taken second place, and the boys would never have submitted to my being ousted, so I am sure it is all best as it is now. Of course they feel sorry, so do I; but we can't all remain as we were always, and they will soon learn to do without me."

Thus she stifled all remorseful or foreboding thoughts, and gave herself up to the intoxicating bliss of "love's young dream."

Holmes would not allow the courting days to be many, and Sallie was whirled through a few weeks of bewildering, pleasure-fraught delight to her wedding-day. She had not been allowed time to drop gently and gradually her home-duties. These were all torn, as it were, by one brief wrench from her hold, and she was speeding away from Oaklea as a bride before she realised what a terrible tearing asunder had taken place. Only one distinct picture did she carry away in her mind, and that one was more than enough to cast a shadow on her gladness. It was the picture of poor little Ben, all through her wedding-day. When she had gone to wake him that morning, she had found him kneeling by the bed which had been his in her dressing-room, and he was praying softly, "God make Mam-lee very happy, and please God, oh, please teach me to be quiet when she goes."

She had knelt beside him, and their tears and petitions had mingled together.

He had gone to church with her, dressed as a page, and had stood as close to her side as possible during the service. She had taken his hand when her husband gave her his arm; so she had left the church between those two, and Hubert had smiled indulgently on Ben, whose white face and wistful eyes fixed upon the bride touched every heart there. The boy was "quiet," as he had prayed to be, all that morning, but Sallie never had seen anything more pitiful than the dumb agony in his face when she stooped to say good-bye.

"My darling, my pet Benjie. I shall return soon, and you will come and stay a long time, and many long times, at the Manor with Sis," she whispered, pressing him to her heart, and feeling how cold were his hands and face. "Darling, say a word of good-bye to Mam-lee, your own Mam-lee," she added, sobbing; and then Ben spoke—

"I won't forget about bearing one another's burdens, dear Mam-lee. I'll carry you when you need me."

That was a strange thing for a child to say, and at such a time; but children do say very remarkable things without

the least knowledge of the why or wherefore which prompts them.

The last thing Sallie saw as she drove away with Hubert was that small, delicate face gazing after her, full of suffering manfully borne in silence; and that look of Ben's remained in her memory through all her life, haunting her happiest hours.

As the carriage disappeared, a long, shuddering sigh escaped Ben's lips, and Roy, turning quickly to the child, caught him up not an instant too soon, for the little form fell limp and helpless in his arms, and for a few minutes Benjie was very "quiet" indeed.

When he came to himself again he was lying on Sallie's bed, some of her bridal finery close by, Roy still supporting him, and old nurse ejaculating—

"The Lord forgive Miss Sallie for leaving her lamb at this tender age! It was ill-considered of her, though I will say she has been an angel to all of us till this day!"

"You are an old idiot, nurse," Aunt Julia exclaimed. "Ben is not a baby now, and can take care of himself. I think any one in this house who grudges Sallie her happiness begun to-day is a selfish beast—so there! If you can't do better than mumble stuff you'd better go back to your nursery, and see to those shirts of Master Roger which you forgot to smooth out yesterday."

Nurse took the broad hint, and departed to her own domain in tears, while the Dragon cleared the room of all but Roy and herself. She would have sent him off, too, but Roy wouldn't go.

"I told Sis I'd see after Ben," he said shortly, and Aunt Julia saw that she must not interfere further. Indeed, she was ready, after a time, to admit that perhaps Ben's elder brother knew as well as she did how to comfort the child.

"I think I can leave him with you now," she said to Roy. "I'll just go down and get those folks out of the house, and see the children settled. They are all fluttering about like so many stray pigeons; it's quite distracting; and as for your father, he is of no use whatever. He has gone to his study, and you never saw such a litter in your life as he has made all over the room. But I'll set you all to rights as soon as I get those wedding guests off the premises."

Accordingly she cleared the drawing-rooms of visitors, and set the family "to rights" by announcing to each member of it that they had better "find something to do, and not stand about like so many stone images looking as woebegone as if a funeral instead of a wedding had taken place."

The young people had been longing for some excuse to expend their over-wrought feelings, and Aunt Julia's ill-timed setting to rights gave the desired pretext. Fairly gave utterance to some very rebellious sentiments. Clara was in a white heat, and declared herself antagonistic to all Dragons. Annie was pert and distinctly libellous in her language. Even Miss Thatcher had something not pleasant to say to Aunt Julia. Roger had gone to bed with a headache, and feeling sad and alone now that there was no thoughtful Sis to come and bathe his temples with eau-de-cologne, or speak soft, soothing words. He felt so miserable that he could only say petulantly—in reply to his aunt's fussy inquiries—"I don't want anything, thank you; I only want to be left alone."

Miss Linton certainly found on Sallie's wedding day that Sallie's vacated throne was likely to be no comfortable place for her successor. Yet I will not affirm that the fault lay all with the Dragon. There was unhappily little of the spirit of true religion in that household, and when the oil of holy love is not kept for ever flowing over the complex machinery of family life, friction, and jarring, and dismemberment are sure to occur.

It was in vain that Mr. Linton buried himself amid his treasures and trumpery, and tried to be oblivious to the active volcano irrupting all over the house. The lava-flood made its way into the study, as well as into every other room. Indeed, he contributed small bursts of his own to the general explosions, and more than once he was heard to groan despairingly—"We shall never get on without Sallie."

Everybody, except his sister and two others, had thought so all along, and were ready to echo his words. Curiously enough, Roy and Ben, the two who had been most closely associated with Sallie, and missed her most, were the only members of the family who cherished a bright hope for the future of the establishment, and believed that it would emerge some time from its newly acquired chaotic condition.

These two had drawn closely to each other since their queen had abdicated. Roy, finding that the little brother could not bear to be removed from Sallie's rooms (where he had nestled under her care, and from whose windows he could look on her new home), quietly transferred his belongings to those apartments, and constituted himself Ben's guardian in her place. In return for his protecting love, Ben gave Roy a grateful, caressing obedience, which was most pleasing to the elder, who, not being much in sympathy with his brothers and sisters, received scant respect from them.

It is true Roy tried earnestly enough to take Sallie's place in some things, and keep the domestic wheels in order; but he had neither her tact nor her patience; he was not moved by a like-minded holiness of purpose, and he failed to make much impression on the others, with the exception of Ben, and this failure had a very depressing effect on him, stultifying his efforts, and impairing his influence.

"I wonder what Sis will think," Roy asked himself sorrowfully one day, "when she returns and finds us all at loggerheads—the servants changed, Fairly and Clara wilder than ever, Annie flaunting in the most audacious costumes, father in a hopeless muddle, and Roger as melancholy as an owl. Ah! I don't think she will be altogether happy at the Manor, when she sees the difference her going there has made *here*."

Roy was right in part, for Sallie was not destined to be "altogether happy at the Manor," though the reason was not quite that which her brother anticipated.

Her honeymoon was a protracted one, for Hubert was fond of travelling, fond of lounging about foreign cities, fond of playing "milord" abroad, fond of his beautiful young wife, and proud of her. So they lingered for months on the Continent; and when that piteous picture of her deserted pet lamb did not obtrude itself too much before her, Sallie was happy and content.

She had a hopeful, sunny disposition, and Hubert's selfishness had not shown itself in any ugly guise as yet before her, so that the young wife believed he would ere long enter the path of righteousness wherein they should walk hand in hand towards a heavenly goal. So she dreamed, so she hoped.

Little did she suspect that the Squire had already entered upon another and very different road, and one which would lead him far astray. *(To be continued.)*

THE conditions of success are these: first, work; second, concentration; third, fitness. Labour is the genius which changes the ugliness of the world into beauty; that turns the greatest curse into a blessing.

HANNAH MORE.

BY MRS. HENRY FAWCETT.

Miss Charlotte M. Yonge has lately written a very charming little biography of Hannah More, which brings strikingly before us the picture of the authoress of "Cœlebs in Search of a Wife," and also depicts in a way that will not easily be forgotten, some of the more striking contrasts between the present day and the England of eighty or ninety years ago. There are some who are always inclined to say "the old is better;" but they must be very curiously constituted who can look back on the social condition of our country at the end of the last century and beginning of this, without being filled with amazement and thankfulness at the improvement that has taken place.

Hannah More.

It is not so generally remembered as it ought to be, that the second half of Hannah More's life was devoted to the service of the poor, especially to the spread of some measure of education and civilisation in the then almost savage districts in the neighbourhood of Cheddar, and of the Mendip Hills. Yet even so advanced an educationalist as Hannah More thought that on no account should the poor be taught to write. In a letter to Bishop Beadon, describing her system of instruction for the poor children in the parishes immediately under her care, she says: "They learn on week-days such coarse works as may fit them for servants. *I allow of no writing for the poor.* My object is not to make fanatics, but to train up the lower classes in habits of industry and piety." We cannot have a more apt illustration of the fact that the advanced reformer of one generation may become, by the natural growth of society, the type of what is most exaggeratedly retrograde in the next. It would be very ungenerous and short-sighted on our part to condemn Hannah More for her narrowness of view. She belonged to a day when the farmers in the village where she sought to establish a Sunday-school begged her to desist because "religion would be the ruin of agriculture, and had done nothing but mischief ever since it had been brought in by the monks at Glastonbury." At another place her educational schemes were so stoutly opposed by all the leading inhabitants that it was impossible to obtain for the school the shelter of any roof, and the children were accordingly assembled to sing a few hymns under an apple-tree. They were soon, however, driven from this shelter by the fears of the owner of the tree, who said he was afraid the hymn singing was "methody," and that "methody" had blighted an apple-tree of his mother!

Barley Wood.

Even these examples of ignorance and superstition might possibly, however, be matched at the present day. More thoroughly significant of a state of things that is past and gone for ever, is the following incident. "On a Sunday," about the year 1790, "in the midst of morning service the congregations in the Bristol churches were startled by the bell and voice of the crier, proclaiming the reward of a guinea for a poor negro girl who had run away." The idea of property in human beings is one that is now universally abhorrent; but less than a hundred years ago the loss of such property could be cried in the midst of congregations assembled to acknowledge the Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of humanity, and it was only one here and there among the worshippers, a little band of whom Hannah More was one, who felt the blasphemy and the mockery of the proceeding.

As an illustration of the extreme hardships endured by the poor before the era of steam manufactures had set in, we learn that the difficulty in obtaining clothes was so great that at Brentford, close to London, thrifty parents bought rags by the pound, and made clothing for their children by

patching the pieces together. Brushes and combs, it is added, were entirely unknown. It is no exaggeration, therefore, to say that the poorest beggar of the present day can, if he choose, be more luxuriously clad and cared for, than the children of the thrifty poor a hundred years ago. The difference in morals is as great as the difference in manners and education. Hannah More heard a charity sermon, in which the preacher, a dignified ecclesiastic, propounded that "the rich and great should be extremely liberal in their charities, because they *were happily exempted from the severer virtues.*" This was the old Papal practice of the sale of indulgences appearing again in a Protestant dress. No wonder, if this was a type of the Gospel that was preached to the rich, that Patty, Hannah's sister, was accustomed to say that she had good hope that the hearts of some of the "rich poor wretches" might be touched by her sister's eloquence.

The change of manners may be illustrated by the following anecdote. Hannah More, in the height of her literary celebrity, was asked to sit next the Bishop of Chester (Dr. Porteous) at dinner, and make him talk. She pressed him to take a little wine. He replied, "I can't drink a *little*, child: therefore I never touch it. Abstinence is easy to me; temperance would be difficult."

These were days when Edmund Spenser was not considered a poet; when Dryden and Pope were preferred to Shakspeare. Hannah, however, defended Milton's "L'Allegro," "Il Penseroso," and "Lycidas," against the strictures of Dr. Johnson; though they found themselves in entire agreement in depreciating Milton's sonnets. Johnson's simile for a sonnet was "a bead carved out of a cherry stone." The noble and solemn music of Milton's majestic sonnets certainly did not harmonise with Johnson's image, and, therefore, as Milton's sonnets were not pretty playthings, it was agreed that he could not write sonnets.

The bigotry and narrowness of religious criticism at that day may be measured by the fact, which Hannah mentions in one of her letters, that her book on "Practical Piety" had been attacked by the Calvinists as giving a sanction to idolatry, because she had spoken of the sun as "he." She did not altogether escape being tarred with the same brush, if we may judge from the passage in "Cœlebs," where she makes Mr. Stanley complain of Day's "Sandford and Merton," and other books which had lately been written for the young, that there was "no intimation in them of the corruption of human nature, and thus that they contradict the catechism when it speaks of being 'born in sin, and the children of wrath.'" She could not help, it appears, taking her religion sadly, as English people are supposed to take their pleasures. There was a great fund of natural gaiety and light heartedness in her, but whether she considered this one of the results of being a child of wrath or not, she did not seem to think gaiety, any more than writing, was a thing to be encouraged in the poor. She describes a great meeting of the schools founded by herself in the Mendip Hills. This annual "Mendip feast" took the form of what we should now call a gigantic school treat. The schools established were spread over an area of twenty-eight miles, and nearly the whole population of the villages, to the number of seven or eight thousand people, attended. The children were generously regaled on substantial fare. But nothing in the form of a game or a festivity of any kind was permitted. The singing of "God save the King" "is the only pleasure in the form of a song we ever allow." . . . . "The meeting," she says again, "took its rise from religious institutions. The day passed in the exercise of duties, and closed with joy. Nothing of a gay nature was introduced. . . ."

One cannot help thinking, on reading this, that she had only herself to thank if, in spite of all her talents and goodness, her name became a byword for severity and primness. Charles Lamb speaks in one of his early letters of "out-Hannahing Hannah More;" and she herself tells what she states is a true story, illustrating the way in which she was regarded in circles where childish merriment was not discountenanced: "A lady gave a very great children's ball," wrote Miss Hannah, somewhere about 1792; "at the upper end of the room, in an elevated place, was dressed out a figure to represent me, with a large rod in my hand, prepared to punish such naughty doings."

The pity of this was that her natural disposition seems to have been sprightly and gay enough; her verses and other compositions often show a very pretty wit. If she had been as merry when she undertook her great work on the Mendips as she was in the days when she was the friend and constant companion of Garrick, Johnson, and Horace Walpole, the general impression left by her character would have been a much more attractive one. Miss Yonge thinks that the chief reason of the austerity of her religion is to be found in the low condition of morals at the time. "There was scarcely," she writes, "an innocent popular song in existence, simple enough," "and unconnected with evil, and the children and their parents were still too utterly rough and uncivilised to make it safe to relax the bonds of restraint for a moment." We cannot think that this excuse is altogether valid: the age that had produced "John Gilpin" and "Goody Two Shoes," can hardly be said to be without one innocent popular song or story which would amuse children. The gloomy complexion given to religion by the school of which Hannah More was a member has a great deal to answer for; in some temperaments, among whom the poet Cowper may be quoted as a type, the gentle and sensitive nature was plunged into profound and morbid melancholy which wrecked the whole existence of its victim; in others, of a more energetic and rebellious character, it produced a violent reaction, not only against religion, but against all moral order, and every kind of restraint. Just as the excesses of the reign of Charles II. followed the grim and rigid piety of Puritan England, so the orgies of the Prince Regent and his boon companions followed the austere, and mirth-killing religion of the early evangelicals. About the time of which we are now writing, a serious attack was made in one of the religious papers upon Jane Taylor, the joint authoress with her sister, of "Hymns for Infant Minds," because in one of her stories, she had represented, without reprobation, a family party of young children enjoying a dance together. When people impute wickedness to actions that are in themselves innocent and harmless, they are tampering with and weakening their own moral sense, and that of all those brought within their influence. To invent sins generally ends in manufacturing sinners.

Hannah More, the youngest but one of five sisters, daughters of Jacob More, master of the school at Stapleton, near Bristol, was born about 1745. Her father belonged to a Norfolk family, several members of which had been numbered amongst Cromwell's Ironsides. Jacob More, however, forsook the family traditions both in politics and religion. He became a churchman and a Tory; and this may have been the cause of his leaving the home of his fathers, and settling in the West Country. He here married a farmer's daughter, of whom little is known except that she persuaded her husband to impart his classical and mathematical learning to his clever little daughter, and that by many acts of motherly sympathy she encouraged her

children to use the talents with which Nature had very liberally endowed them. The five sisters, Mary, Betsy, Sally, Hannah, and Patty, were a tribe of whom any mother might have been proud. Hannah and Patty were inseparable, sharing every hope and every occupation and possession. Their taste was for literature. Sally was the wit of the family. Mary and Betsy supplied the practical, housewifely element in the quintet. As a little girl, Hannah's two ambitions were to "live in a cottage too low for a clock, and to go to London to see bishops and booksellers!" At the age of twenty-one, Mary More set up a school on her own account in Bristol. Betsy and Sally were her assistants, and Hannah and Patty were among the first batch of pupils. Sally in after years thus described this adventurous proceeding to her friend, Dr. Johnson: "We were born with more desires than guineas. As years increased our appetites the cupboard at home grew too small to gratify them; and with a bottle of water, a bed, and a blanket, we set out to seek our fortunes. We found a great house with nothing in it—and it was like to remain so—till, looking into our knowledge-boxes, we happened to find a little *larning*—a good thing when land is gone, or rather none, and so at last, by giving a little of this larning to those who had none, we got a good store of gold in return," (pp. 6-7, Miss Yonge's "Hannah More.")

Hannah's unusual abilities soon began to attract notice. She wrote a play for school acting, which had a great success, and we are told how on one occasion, when she was ill, (her health was always delicate) her doctor was so carried away by the charm of her conversation that he forgot to make any inquiries about her health; he took his leave, and was on the point of departing from the house, when he returned with the inquiry, "And how are you, my poor child?"

Hannah's first visit to London was about 1772 or 1773, when she was twenty-seven or twenty-eight years old. She saw the first performance of Sheridan's *Rivals*, and sagely remarks that the writer must be treated with indulgence, for that "much is to be forgiven in an author of twenty-three, whose genius is likely to be his principal inheritance." She was introduced to Miss Reynolds, Sir Joshua's sister, and this lady promised to make her known to Dr. Johnson. She saw Garrick, the great actor, in *King Lear*, and was so much impressed by him that she wrote a long description of his acting in a letter that was handed about among her friends and gained a sort of half publicity, as seems to have been not unusual at that time. This letter paved the way for an introduction to Garrick and his wife, and Hannah More became one of their most intimate and valued friends. Garrick encouraged Hannah to write for the stage, and some of her pieces, under his fostering care, had an astonishing degree of success. Garrick's favourite name for the poetess was "Nine," by way of delicate comparison to the nine muses. Horace Walpole used to call her "Saint Hannah." Dr. Johnson called her "a saucy girl," perhaps the nicest epithet of the three. When Garrick died, Hannah was one of the ladies admitted to Westminster Abbey to witness his funeral. Hannah spent the first year of Mrs. Garrick's widowhood with Mrs. Garrick at her house near Hampton; and on many other occasions it was shown, in a similar way, that Hannah was one on whom her friends were accustomed to depend for sympathy and support in the darkest hours of mourning and sorrow. After Garrick's death Hannah never visited a theatre again. She did not even go to see her own play, *The Fatal Falsehood*, which Garrick had been preparing to put on the stage at the time of his death.

From the time of her first entry into London society she seems to have had access to all that was best in the world of literature and art, and to have played a distinguished part there. It is, therefore, the more to her credit that she turned from this gay and brilliant life in order to devote herself to the work of education and civilisation among the poor people of Cheddar and the Mendips.

She and her sister Patty had settled in a pretty cottage home called Cowslip Green, in the parish of Wrington, near Bristol. Here they were visited by their friends from the great world, and hence they, in their turn, made their annual visit to London. Mention has already been made of the painful impression produced in Hannah on hearing, in a Bristol church, the loss of a negro girl proclaimed by the crier in the midst of the morning service. She was a woman much influenced by her friendships. She had been a poetess and dramatist under the influence of Johnson and Garrick; Wilberforce and John Newton (Cowper's friend) had now awakened in her a passion of pity for slaves and a passion of hatred against slavery. Miss Yonge states that Hannah was before this a friend of Lady Middleton, "who had first inspired William Wilberforce with the idea of his great work in life; and on going to make her annual visit to Mrs. Garrick in the winter of 1787, she first heard of the Bill that was to be introduced into Parliament "for the abolition of slavery." In 1789 William Wilberforce came to spend a few days with the Misses More, at Cowslip Green. By way of showing him the beauties of the neighbourhood the ladies sent him to see the picturesque cliffs and caves of Cheddar. When their guest returned he was remarkably silent; the food that had been sent with him was untasted, and he remained for some hours alone in his room. His hostesses naturally feared that he was ill; but when he rejoined them they discovered that instead of admiring the natural beauties of Cheddar, the tender heart of the future emancipator of the slaves had been wholly engrossed by the evidences which had presented themselves of human depravity, misery, and neglect. The inhabitants of the picturesque region were almost savages; their poverty was frightful; there was no sort of attempt at education of any kind; there were no resident clergymen; the people were utterly lawless; it was unsafe for a decent person to go amongst them unprotected; writs could not be served but at risk of the constable being thrown down some cliff or pit. These things Wilberforce had discovered, and they obscured for him all the pleasure which pretty scenery could afford. "Miss More," he said, "something must be done for Cheddar"; and after much consultation and thought, before he went away, he again charged the ladies with the task of civilising and educating the wild district which lay at their doors, and said, "If you will be at the trouble, I will be at the expense."

From this time the sisters led a new life. It is true that Hannah did not give up her literary pursuits; she laboured with her pen as well as with other instruments in pursuit of her end. But now the main object of both Patty and Hannah was to educate and reclaim the inhabitants of the districts which have been named. The work, merely from a physical point of view, was by no means light. There were no roads, or such bad ones that the only practical means of travelling was on horseback. Their first task was to endeavour to gain the good-will and assistance of the farmers and gentry Patty says of some of these "They are as ignorant as the beast that perish; intoxicated every day before dinner, and plunged into such vice that I begin to think London a virtuous place." Such clergy as did occasionally visit the district might almost as well have stayed away. Of one, Patty says, "Mr. G—— is intoxicated about six times a week, and very frequently

is prevented from preaching by two black eyes, honestly earned by fighting." The sisters showed their good sense, as well as their benevolence, by finding out and utilising whatever in the way of a good influence existed in the district. They rejected no help because the helper did not conform to their particular pattern of orthodoxy. They did not hesitate, although they were strict churchwomen, to engage a Methodist to act as mistress in one of their Sunday-schools. They soon had thirteen villages under their care, and an improvement began to be visible in nearly all of them. Of one of them, Congresbury, Hannah wrote describing the first opening of the school:—"It was an affecting sight. Several of the grown-up youths had been tried at the last assizes, three were the children of a person lately condemned to be hanged, many thieves, all ignorant, profane and vicious beyond belief. Of this banditti we have enlisted one hundred and seventy; and when the clergyman, a hard man, who is also the magistrate, saw these creatures kneeling round us, whom he had seldom seen but to commit or punish in some way, he burst into tears. I can do them little good, I fear, but the grace of God can do all. . . .

The Misses More did not escape bitter persecution and misrepresentation in their good work. A Mr. Bere, curate of Wedmore, distinguished himself by his furious hostility to them. He threatened them with penal proceedings for teaching without a license, induced the farmers to make formal complaint to the Archdeacon against them, and obtained an affidavit from a half-witted young man, whom they had befriended, making personal charges against them. Influential friends, however, came to the ladies' assistance. The good Bishop said, "when he heard it was Miss Hannah More he knew it was all right." But the persecution they endured was not without its effect on their health and spirits. Hannah was laid up for about two years at this time, and was unable to pursue her work amongst her poor scholars.

In 1802 the sisters removed from Cowslip Green to Barley Woods, here Hannah wrote some of her best known books. None of her works is better known, at least by name, than "Cœlebs in Search of a Wife." Here also, by the request of Queen Charlotte, she wrote a book of advice on the education of Princess Charlotte, who, it was thought, was destined to become Queen of England. "The Shepherd of Salisbury Plain" was written at Cowslip Green, as one of a large series of simple stories for the poor, intended by the sisters to counteract and undersell popular literature of an objectionable character. The Misses More produced three of these tracts a month, and it is calculated that more than two millions were sold in a year. By many "The Shepherd of Salisbury Plain" was considered Hannah More's masterpiece. Wilberforce said he "would rather present himself before Heaven with the "Shepherd" in his hand than with "Peveril of the Peak."

At Barley Wood Hannah experienced the great and unavoidable calamity of old age, the gradual loss, by death, of the friends and allies of her youth. Johnson, Burke, Reynolds, and Garrick were dead long ago, and the brilliant society in London, of which Hannah had formed part, had lost many of its stars. One by one, death laid its hand on the members of the More sisterhood, till Hannah and Patty, the life-long friends and companions, were the only two left. In September, 1819, Mr. and Mrs. Wilberforce being on a visit to the sisters, Patty sat up till a late hour of the night talking to her guests of old days, and Hannah's first introduction to London. In the morning the first news that met the visitors' ears was that Patty was dying. She lingered about a week, but never regained consciousness, and then Hannah was left quite alone, the last of all the five. But her friends gathered round her, and her vigorous intellect and strong sense of duty did not allow her to be idle. She still had vivacity enough to write humorous letters and verses, and to poke fun at what she considered the misdirected zeal of some educationalists.

A few years before her death, Hannah More removed to Windsor Terrace, Clifton. Her old age was cheered by the companionship of a friend, Miss Frowd, of whom Miss More wrote, she is "my domestic chaplain, my house apothecary, knitted and lamplighter, missionary to my numerous and learned seminaries, and, without controversy, the queen of clubs" (penny clubs). When an old lady of more than eighty can write in this buoyant strain, it is the more to be regretted that she seemed to have thought gaiety was a thing it was dangerous to encourage a taste for in the poor. Still, though we cannot help regretting this, we shall do well if we can imitate, in however humble a degree, her unselfish devotion to goodness and the way in which she spent the best years of her life in trying to improve the lot of the most destitute and miserable of her neighbours. She lived to be eighty-eight. She had no long illness, and no failure of any of her mental faculties, except that of memory. Her body became gradually weaker, and she longed for death. One day "she stretched out her arms, crying 'Patty! joy!'" She never spoke again, dying a few hours later, on September 7th, 1883.

A FEBRUARY IDYLL.

MAIDEN, fair and meditative,
Pausing on thy wind-swept way,
Dreaming of far summer glories,
Summer's in thy heart to-day.

Hast thou heard a bird's first warble
Quivering in the keen, crisp air?
Hast thou seen the year's first jewels,
Snowdrops marvellously fair?

Has a swift, stray gleam of sunshine
Kissed thee to responsive glee?
Hast thy heart leaped up in yearning
For spring's charmèd ministry?

Nay, methinks thy maiden visions
Are more soul-beguiling far;
Brighter, sweeter, more entrancing
Than dear Nature's ever are.

Visions of a golden future
When thou sitt'st enthroned as queen,
Rich in the adored possession
Of a love so deep I ween

Thou dost hold it peerless—deathless—
Ah, my maiden, list, beware!
Life's young dreams are like spring mornings,
Flecked with shadows here and there.

JANE E. LIVOCK.

"Dreaming of far summer glories."

A TALE OF THE EIGHTY YEARS' WAR.

TRANSLATED FROM THE DUTCH BY B. PECHMAN.

T was a fine summer evening; the sun had already set, but the weather-cock on the church tower still glittered and sparkled in the afterglow. The neat, simply-dressed women of the village sat on wooden benches in the open air, spinning their wool. The busy labourer turned his steps gaily homewards, to spend a cheery hour with his family after the daily toil for bread was oevr. Merry boys and girls sported hither and thither, enjoying undisturbed their youthful games and pastimes. The shepherds led their sheep to the folds, while the old dogs sprang round and round them, barking loudly. The whole scene was lively, yet peaceful. Peaceful—in the midst of the tumults which were agitating the outer world! Peaceful—though the eighty years' war with Spain was still raging!

Ah! those Spaniards!—the villagers had *heard* a great deal about them. Harmen Krijnsz, the shopkeeper from Haarlem, who had outlived the rigours of the siege, had much to say on this subject. But up to the present time they had never *seen* any of them. And earnestly they prayed to God to remain free from their dreaded presence. The time was soon coming—very soon—when they would experience what it was to meet the Spaniards face to face!

Scarcely had eight o'clock struck, the children had just finished saying their prayers, and the homely folks were about to sit down to their supper of thick rye porridge, when an unwonted commotion was heard on the road. A troop of Spanish cavalry was riding into Ede! Why had they chosen this little village? Well, the Spaniards had crossed the river Isel, near Dieren, intending to honour Arnhem with a visit. The *burgers* of Arnhem, however, did not appreciate this honour! They closed the gates and lifted the drawbridge. But the Spaniards would not return empty-handed. So they decided to go on further, and remain for a few days at Ede. Their arrival caused a great panic among the women, who concealed themselves and their little ones in the lofts and cellars. All money and ornaments were hurriedly hidden away in safe places. The men remained calm and unmoved, boldly awaiting the course of events, determined with God's assistance to protect their dearest treasures from the fierce invaders, even if in so doing they should lose their own lives.

The Spaniards halted in the churchyard, close to the tower, and dismounted; tied their horses to the trees, then began to look about them. The commander, Count Hendrik Van den Berg, thus addressed his soldiers—

"Listen, my lads; yonder town has refused to receive us. Here we are at liberty to do exactly as we please. Let us make it worth while to have taken this journey!"

Of course the soldiers needed no second bidding! They speedily dispersed, eager for booty. Count Hendrik and his officers betook themselves to the Castle of Kernheim. You shall presently hear what there befell them.

The villagers received their unwelcome guests with as good a grace as they could. They offered them their strong, home-brewed ale, which but too well accorded with their tastes. They soon became intoxicated, and behaved like madmen. They insisted on having a good supper, and above all meat. Not salted meat, but fresh meat. They compelled many a poor peasant to slaughter his one cow. And if any man was unwilling to do this, they bound him with cords, dragged him to the churchyard, and there nailed him by the ear to a tree.

Their cruelty knew no restraints. They even went so far as to haul the mattresses from under invalid women and bedridden old men, to lie at ease upon them themselves. The miserable inhabitants of the village were, in short, robbed of everything they possessed by these unprincipled men. They were forced to disclose their most secret hiding-places, for, if they hesitated, the soldiers threatened to murder one and all, and set fire to the cottages. The miscreants continued their revels until far into the night—a night passed by the wretched villagers in weeping and lamentations. How many silent, heart-felt prayers went up to the throne of the Almighty God, imploring His merciful aid and protection! What would the morrow bring forth?

But trust in the Lord, my poor people, and be not troubled! When your need is greatest He will send you an unexpected deliverer! . . . .

Very early next morning the count awoke, and left his bed. After a hasty breakfast he went out to explore the beautiful lanes and woods by which the castle was surrounded. All was now quiet in the village. The Spaniards were slumbering after their carousal; the peasants still sat sorrowfully by their hearths. Silence reigned over all things; the solemn stillness of the early morning hours. Suddenly the silence was broken! The loud tones of a horn sounded in the ears of the count and his companions! They regarded one another with looks of dismay! Do they hear aright, or are they mistaken? No, it is no mistake! Distinctly and clearly, over the open plain, the breeze bears to them the strains of the Dutch National Hymn—the stirring, inspiriting tune of the *Wilhelmus*.

What does this betoken? Can the army of Prince Maurice have overtaken them already? Only three days ago it was still at Amersfoort, and now all at once here? What is to be done? To come to an engagement would be but unavailing bloodshed, with the soldiers in their present intoxicated, drowsy condition. Their only resource is to beat an ignominious retreat. To saddle their horses is the work of a moment. In hot haste they gallop to the village and give the alarm.

The terrified soldiers, roused from their heavy sleep, obey the summons but slowly, staggering along unsteadily, as yet only half awake.

"The prince's army is upon us!" shouts Van den Berg. "Quick, comrades, bestir yourselves; to horse, to horse! Let no one linger! Mount instantly, and then—forwards!"

In wild confusion they flee up the same road down which they had yesterday evening ridden in so orderly a manner.

Closely pursued, I presume, by the army of Prince Maurice?

You are wrong, dear reader! The prince's army was still in its quarters at Amersfoort. He who had played the *Wilhelmus* to such good effect, was merely a keeper from the hunting-lodge Harseloe, near Bennekom, following a deer or some other game. To while away the time as he went, he amused himself by playing the *Wilhelmus* on his hunting-horn, being totally unaware that the Spaniards were in the neighbourhood. He was thus, by God's providence, the unconscious means of ridding the villagers from their ruthless tormentors!

SOME HINTS AS TO LETTER-WRITING.

IT is not possible for every one to write a good letter, but it is certainly possible for most people to refrain from writing a bad one. In other words, graces of style and lightness of treatment may not fall to the lot of all, but the power of avoiding flagrant errors is within the reach even of the least clever.

Letters, roughly speaking, may be divided into two classes—those where the form is strictly prescribed, and which therefore reveal little more concerning the writer than that she has been properly educated, and is familiar with the usages of polite society; and those which preserve more or less the character of an ordinary conversation, and which, imposing no conditions on the writer, save the simple ones of beginning and ending in a particular fashion, enable us to form some idea of his or her intelligence and culture.

On the first kind of letters we need not dwell at any length. They deal mostly with the fêtes, feasts, and other functions of civilised life, and as their form is stereotyped, few errors can creep into their composition. This fact, however, renders it all the more necessary to guard against such blunders as hurry, carelessness, and general looseness of expression might occasionally introduce into them.

For instance, it is not unusual to find people who are really well educated, but who are either not given to weighing the language they use or have never had special instruction in social formulæ, answering an invitation to a dinner in the following fashion:—

"Mrs A. *will have much pleasure* in accepting Mrs. B.'s kind invitation to dinner on Tuesday, May 1st."

A little reflection would show Mrs. A. that she has not here expressed her meaning properly. What she wished to convey to Mrs. B. was the acceptance of an invitation, coupled with the statement that it gave her pleasure to accept it. What she really conveys, though, by this use of the future tense is that she intends to accept the invitation some day or other.

That this is so is clear from the fact that were Mrs. A. postponing the acceptance of an invitation, she would use precisely the same tense of the verb:—

"Dear Mrs. B.,—Laura has not yet come back from Dover, but when she arrives to-morrow I will give her your kind invitation, which I am sure she *will have* much pleasure in accepting."

When the letter answering an invitation is phrased somewhat differently the use of the future tense becomes, of course, necessary. It is perfectly right to say "Mrs. B. *will have* much pleasure in availing herself of Mrs. A.'s kind invitation," because a person does not avail herself of an invitation until she actually does the thing she has been invited to do. In the same way it is admissible to say, Mrs. A. "*will have* much pleasure" when the context is, "in dining with Mrs. B. next Tuesday week," since the act in contemplation is distinctly in the future. The act of accepting an invitation, however, is a matter of the present, and so the right form is, "Mrs. A. *accepts* with pleasure," or, "has much pleasure in accepting."

People who would never fail into the grammatical error we have just indicated may yet run foul of conventional rules by returning answers written in the first person to "At home" cards and to invitations written in the third. Though this is altogether wrong as a general rule, there are cases when it is, of course, permissible; as, for instance, when the person answering an invitation is an intimate friend of the person inviting her, and therefore knows well that the formal invitation has only been sent to her in order that she should have a tangible reminder of her engagement to slip into the frame of the looking-glass or otherwise preserve.

Again, an answer in the first person may be returned to one written in the third when the invited guest is a recent acquaintance, and is desirous of making it clear that her refusal is really unavoidable, and not dictated by a desire to politely limit intimacy.

This licence is allowed because it is almost impossible to enter into very detailed explanations in a letter written in the third person. Such letters need to be exceedingly brief, or bewildering confusion is the result. It is for this reason that ladies should seldom use the third-person form when giving and seeking servants' characters. It is, of course, a suitable enough form when Mrs. A. has simply to assure Mrs. B. that Sarah Ann is truthful, honest, and industrious.

But when a dozen questions have to be answered or put, the third-person form of letter involves either a sickening repetition of the names Mrs. A., Mrs. B., and Sarah Ann, or else an ambiguity, which may be amusing, but certainly is not educated. It is infinitely better then to write an ordinary letter, beginning, "Dear Madam," and ending, "Yours faithfully." When we pass from letters of form and business to those which are the medium of social intercourse other considerations besides mere grammatical correctness and compliance with conventional laws have to be taken in account. We then have to aim at that indescribable, indefinable something which we call style.

Now the two things which, perhaps, most tend to give finish and lightness to letters are (1) the transitional phrases by which the writer glides from one subject to another, and (2) the mode in which she concludes her epistle.

The power of introducing felicitous transitions is a matter more of gift than instruction. No rules can be laid down that will enable people to find these; all that can be done is to draw attention to happy instances, and to trust that close familiarity with them may induce successful though unconscious imitation. The recently published letters of Mrs. Carlyle are beyond question the best fitted for this purpose, and should be studied by all those who aim at forming a fluent, pleasant epistolary style. With regard to the endings of letters, however, much that is definite in the way of practical hints can be said here. Absolute rules can be prescribed, conformity with which positively ensures a pleasing result.

For instance, people can be urged on occasions to make the signature an integral portion of the letter by letting the last sentence run straight on to it without break or pause in the sense. Capital examples of the effect secured by recourse to this device are furnished by the letter in which Dr. Johnson rejects with noble scorn Lord Chesterfield's tardy offer of patronage, and again by that fine specimen of irony addressed to Oliver Cromwell by the author of "Killing no Murder."

All our eminent letter-writers, however, supply us with instances of a similar kind. Thus Pope, writing to Swift to condole with him on the death of Gay, closes his com-

munication by saying, "Adieu. I can add nothing to what you will feel, and diminish nothing from it. Yet write to me soon. Believe me, no man now living loves you better—I believe no man ever did than "A. POPE."

Again, Lady M. Wortley Montague, when counselling her daughter on the education of young girls, concludes as follows:—

"I am afraid you will think this a very long, insignificant letter. I hope the kindness of the design will excuse it, being willing to give you every proof in my power that I am

"Your affectionate mother,

"M. W."

And elsewhere, when urging the same daughter to bear up under a heavy affliction, she writes—

"My dear child, endeavour to raise your spirits, and believe me this advice comes from the tenderness of

"Your most affectionate mother,

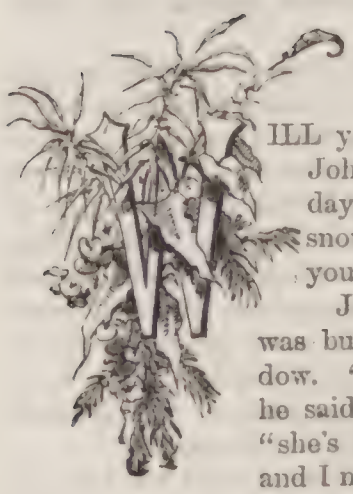
"M. W."

It would be a little stilted, in a very intimate correspondence, where letters are constantly passing to an fro, to end one's letters uniformly in the above fashion. The difficulty of always running the closing sentences on to the signature is too great to permit of its being done frequently without a sense of labour and an air of undue elaboration. The ease of intimacy permits an abrupt close, though even here it is not unwise, before signing one's name, to glide from any impersonal topics which are under discussion to something more personal to the receiver of the letter. Thus, in a letter in which Voltaire counsels a friend to cut out some irrelevancies from a literary composition, he concludes thus: "One should never forget one's principal object. That is why, indeed, I think always of you." And elsewhere, after remarking that his health is worse than ever, he winds up thus: "I must say that I am quite astonished to find myself still alive. However, so long as I am alive I shall go on admiring and caring for you."

THE BEST WORKER

BY EDITH C. KENYON.

Author of "Daring Tom," etc., etc.



"WILL you come out with me to slide, John, since we can't go to school to-day?" asked Willie Sinclair, one cold, snowy morning in December, of his younger brother.

John looked at their mother, who was busy ironing at a table by the window. "I don't like to leave mother," he said in a low tone to his brother; "she's not looking well this morning, and I might be able to help her a little if I stay in."

"Nonsense," said Willie, vexed at the thought of giving up the sliding; but as he looked at their mother he noticed how tired and sad she looked, and he felt sorry for her, and said, "There never was such a mother as ours, was there, John?"

"*Never*," said John, emphatically.

The mother smiled. "You are dear, good boys," she said; "but, oh! I wish you could help to earn a little money. You know since your father went to Manchester in search of work we have got poorer and poorer, and soon I fear we shall have to give up our little home."

The boys looked grave. "But what can we do?" said Willie. "We can't get work such weather as this;" and he looked out sadly at the snow.

"We can *try*," said Johnny. "I am going to see what can be done."

"But, oh! my boy, what can *you* do?" said his mother, looking sadly at him. For John was a cripple, though he was a fine, tall boy for his age, for he had been hurt in a railway accident a few years before, and had lost one arm. He coloured now, for he did not like it to be noticed, but he said bravely, "I will do what I can, mother, and you have often said, 'God helps those who help themselves.' Come, Willie."

The boys hurried out of the house, and through the deep snow of the nearest streets. Then they met some other boys with spades and shovels who were going to clear away the snow from gentlemen's houses.

"The very thing," cried John; "we will do it, too."

"But we have not got a brush or a spade," said Willie, looking longingly towards some boys who were sliding on a part of the pavement which had been swept clean.

"We can go to some house and offer to clear away the snow if they will give us tools," said John, who, though the younger, was the more thoughtful of the two.

Accordingly the two boys tried house after house until they came to one where the master was already bargaining with two other boys to clear away the snow. John and Willie turned to go somewhere else when they saw that, but the gentleman called to them to stop. "You shall all do it," he said, "for I want it to be done very quickly and very well. And then you must all come to me for sixpence each, when you have cleared a path from the drive gate to the house."

The boys thanked him eagerly, and very soon all four had set to work. But it was no easy task; the snow was very deep on the short carriage-drive, and presently three of them stopped every now and then to rest and talk. But not so John. He thought of his mother and worked hard. "I will take her more than one sixpence to-day, if possible" he said, for he loved her dearly. Willie often said he loved her, too; but Willie loved himself and his own pleasure very much also, and so he could not give his mother so much love as John.

"Courage," John whispered to himself, for only he knew how difficult it was to keep up such hard work with only one arm. It ached and trembled dreadfully, but still he thought of his mother and worked on.

"Bravo," said a voice behind him all at once. "Why, you can do as much with one arm as all the others with two each!"

John coloured, and wished that Willie had not happened to be gossiping with the other boys instead of working just then. "They mean no harm, sir," he said; "you see it's rather hard work."

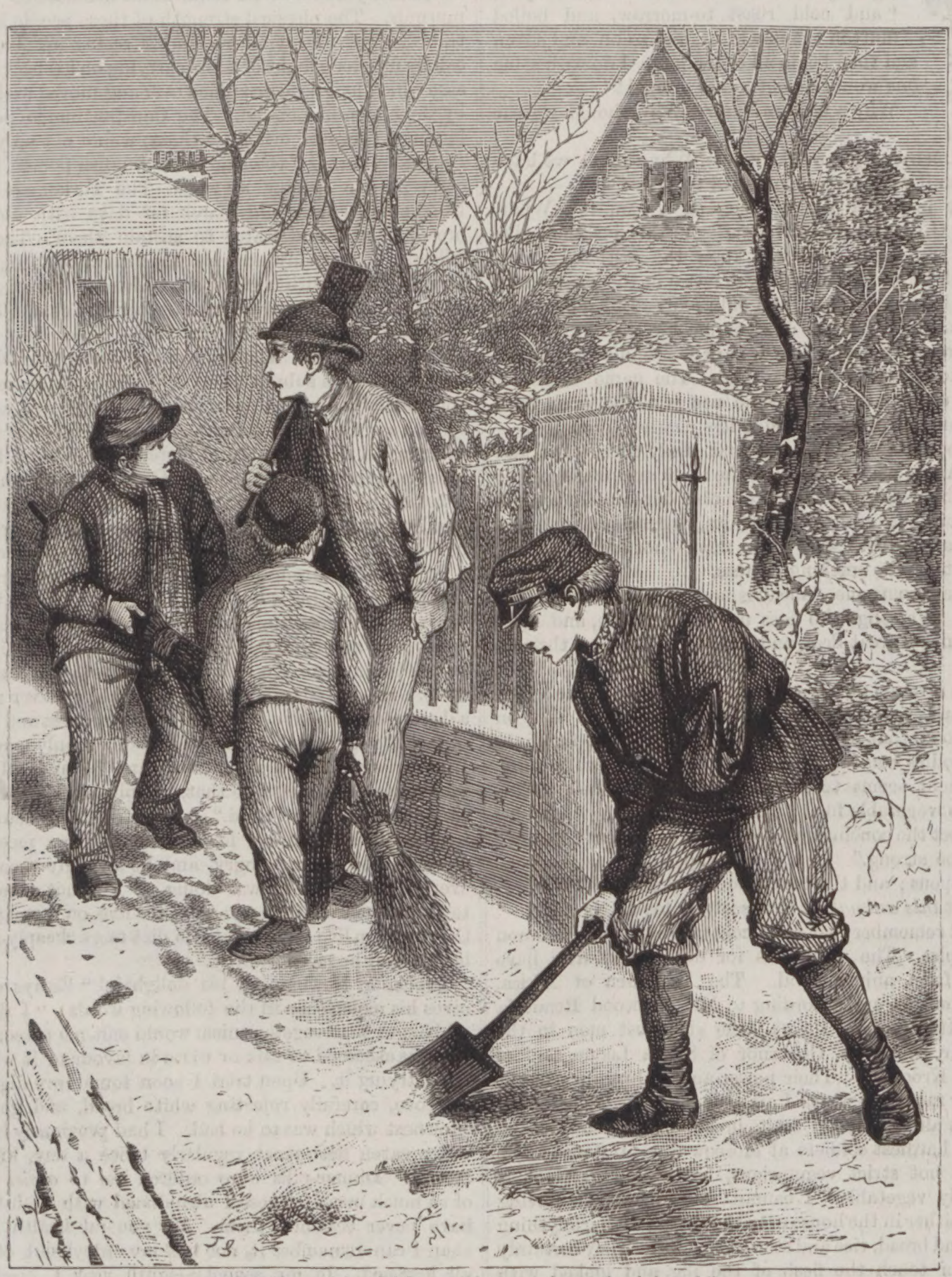
"But not so hard for them as for you, my boy. Tell me, how did you lose your arm?"

John told him; and then the gentleman said, "But how could your friends let you do such work as this?"

"My mother is very poor, sir. She did not wish me to come, but I said God would help me if I tried to help myself. Mother taught me that, sir."

"You must have a good mother. Well, my boy, you shall not have to shovel snow again if I can help it," said the gentleman, kindly. "Come here, lads," he called to the others; you will not be surprised to hear that I shall offer the situation to the best worker." And he placed his hand kindly on John's shoulder.

"I want no thanks," said the gentleman, pleasantly, "only be a good boy always and do as you are told. Here is half-a-crown for you. Run home and tell your mother.



"He thought of his mother and worked hard."

and when they had come up hanging their heads a little and colouring much, he went on: "Perhaps you wondered that I employed so many of you to-day, but the fact was I wanted a sharp boy to wait upon me and run errands, and I thought I would watch you from the window and make my choice. I soon found that three of you did not like work much. And

John's mother was delighted when he ran home to tell her he was to have seven shillings a week to begin with, and his clothes and board and lodging. "I shall give all the money to you, dear mother," he said.

"And I shall be able to keep the home together now till father comes back," she replied, with tears of joy.

WHAT SHALL WE EAT?

BY ELIZABETH MARTYN.

"WHAT shall we eat? Roast beef to-day," sighs the house-wife, tired of her subject, "and cold roast to-morrow, and boiled mutton the day after, and so on, and so on, and then begin all over again. I do wish some one would invent a new animal!"

Why a new *animal?* Why should we eat flesh at all?

A good many people would retort, Why should we have canine teeth if we were not intended to eat flesh?

Alas, one may well ask, "What's in a name?" What, indeed! "Give a dog a bad name"—in this instance, give a tooth a bad name—and you know the rest. We have indeed, each of us, four sharp teeth; two in the upper and two in the lower jaw: four, and only four. But if you look into the mouth of the next dog you meet you will find that his teeth are not like the four we are so proud of as giving us liberty to eat what the dog does. The name "canine" has misled us, and we must come nearer home, even unto those creatures which are more or less nearly related to us—I mean the apes and monkeys—and study their ways and be wise. Anatomists tell us that the teeth and the digestive organs of these animals closely resemble ours; and they eat no flesh, but live entirely on fruits, vegetables, and nuts. Their four sharp teeth were given them—not for the tearing of flesh, but for the cracking of nuts.

"But," says some one, "meat is necessary to one's health; no one can be strong who does not take a little, and most people require a great deal, and that twice or even thrice a day."

We have a vague idea within us, when we note the great strength and power of endurance of an animal fed on vegetable food, that if we eat that animal we shall take into our own bodies some of those qualities which we admire. The argument seems to run something like this: "This animal eats vegetable food; this animal is strong"; and we might expect the conclusion to be, "Let us also eat vegetable food, and be strong." It is the unexpected, however, that always happens; and the conclusion come to in this case is—"*Let us eat this animal.*" It is scarcely logical, is it?

We must remember that meat-consumption is not common to all peoples. The Brahmins for untold centuries have abstained from animal food. The Kroomen of Africa, nourished on rice, are, according to Mr. Winwood Reade (a surgeon settled among them) "the strongest men in the world." Mr. Kennedy, Governor of Sierra Leone, said of these same Kroomen, "Their power and endurance exceeds that of any race with which I am acquainted." The Italians live almost altogether on fruit, bread, and macaroni; and Napoleon's hardiest soldiers at Moscow were Italians. The Arabs, are not strict vegetarians, but their chief food is undoubtedly vegetable. I cannot remember ever having seen them either in the house or in the streets eating anything but dates and bread, rice and stewed turnips. They certainly would never touch the flesh of the pig, and looked with horror and disgust on the eaters of ham and bacon. (I have never felt sure, by the way, that Moses and Mohammed were so very far wrong when they forbade the eating of swine's flesh.) The Arabs are noted for their wiriness and strength. An Egyptian traveller says of them that they "suffer themselves to be built up with loads as though they had no more sense of oppression than a truck or a wheelbarrow. The Arab groom, too, will run by the side of his master's horse for as many hours as he requires his attendance without a murmur. The physical strength of these people is most extraordinary." I myself remember seeing an Arab coming calmly up a long flight of stairs carrying on his back a packing-case which had been grumbled over and moved with difficulty by three men in London. The Constantinople porters and boatmen (vegetarians, all of them) would not only, says the *Spectator*, carry off the load of an English porter, but would carry off the porter as well! The Turkoman troops in Northern Persia would march for days with nothing but bread, cheese, and water to sustain them. The English officers who for many years had the drilling of them, wondered at these men with a great astonishment, especially as the winters in that country are most bitterly cold. Then take the case of the Lapps and the Finns, living side by side in the same latitude. The Lapps live chiefly on reindeer flesh; while the Finns subsist on grain and are full-sized, strong, and handsome. Both peoples are Mongolians, so that we cannot ascribe the difference in size to difference in race. Time would fail me to tell of Hercules of old and his diet of pease-pudding, and of the other Greek athletes who were all, it is said, of vegetarian habits. And is it necessary to remind you, at this stage, that the gigantic strength of our next-of-kin, the gorilla, is supported on vegetable food?

So much for strength. Now as to health. A man got up in a public meeting a few months ago to give his testimony in favour of vegetarianism. He belongs to the great Thames Ironworks, and labours hard every day. He gave up flesh-eating three years ago, and has been better in health ever since. He and his wife and eight children never now need a doctor, and are known as one of the strongest and healthiest of families for miles round. He is not the only man in those Ironworks who is a vegetarian; and he and all his like-minded associates declare that, in spite of their heavy work, they "never now feel tired." Another working-man said that for the thirteen years of his abstinence from meat he had never felt tired or hungry, and he strongly recommended everyone to do as he was doing. "I do not come here to tell you," he said, "that you cannot live on a meat-diet, but that you can live on a vegetable diet more cheaply and much better, and be more healthy."

Professor Newman, in his delightful "Essays on Diet," gives his experience in the following words: "I did not at all believe that vegetarianism would suit me personally, and yet was ashamed to talk or write in favour of it without at least trying it. Upon trial I soon found my digestion to improve, carefully rejecting white bread, and getting the brownest which was to be had. I had previously by medical order eaten flesh-meat regularly twice a day, and rather largely. Dinner-pills were ordered me to *assist* digestion of so much meat. These I abandoned with flesh-food, and have never resumed them. My general health is better than I can remember it, nor has my enjoyment of food at all lessened. In my seventy-eighth year I need neither doctors nor medicine. By general testimony the colour of my skin and fulness of my cheeks have much improved under this diet, which I would now on no account give up, though I adopted it with much more of fear than of hope."

Professor Fergusson, the historian, had a dangerous attack of paralysis when he was sixty-one years of age. Dr. Black, who attended him (not himself a vegetarian), ordered him

to give up animal food. He did so, recovered, ate no more meat, entered upon a remarkably strong old age, and died at the age of ninety-three.

Thirteen years ago a poor woman was so ill as to be "given up" by three doctors. As a last resource she was put on a diet of milk and vegetables, and is living to this day. It is thought that if she should take to flesh-eating again, the old bad symptoms would re-appear; but she knows when she is well off.

And now for the question of economy. Lives there the man who has never groaned over the length and depth of his butcher's bills? And does not every housekeeper know that the heaviest item in her expenditure is that of meat? One does not need to dwell on this part of the subject; the burden presses upon us all. It is a difficult matter, moreover, to say courageously that we will eat no meat while the world standeth, simply because we cannot afford it, and need the money for other things; for custom is often stronger than conviction. And, as a rule, people have no particular convictions, but go on as their fathers did before them and strive always to do what is "proper."

A few months ago a lady had occasion to go into a very poor home. Time: the middle of a Sunday morning. Place: a village on the Firth of Forth. She found the family breakfasting late on fried chops, and noticed on the dresser a plate of sliced raw meat, heaped up and running over, intended, evidently, for a still later meal. She saw also that the baby of the family looked miserably thin and ill, and her motherly interest was aroused. She asked what it was fed on. "Oh, anything that the rest of us are getting—bread, or meat, or tea—it will take anything!" Did they give it no milk? "No, not much; they *could not afford it.*" My friend talked the people into promising to give the baby at least a half-penny worth of milk a day in future, and left, feeling painfully that even if the child lived, which was doubtful, its existence must be one of suffering. In this case I need hardly point out, the consumption of meat might have been lessened without detriment to the grown persons, and to the very great advantage of the poor three-months'-old baby.

But in this matter, as in most others, the well-to-do must set an example to the poor.

Professor Newman says that "vegetarian families, who are almost always teetotalers, have much pecuniary advantage over those who are teetotalers without being vegetarians." This, as the French would say, "goes without saying."

He gives a curious little estimate made at a pig-killing place in Cincinnati. Careful calculation proved that the oatmeal used in fattening the pigs "would have gone nearly four times as far in feeding mankind" as the pork produced by it. Think of the loss of our beloved oatmeal, and think, too, of the price of pork in comparison!

I am obliged to treat this question very sketchily, but would like to remind you that farmers every year are working more and more for the butcher, and less and less for the grain market, and that thousands of acres which used to bear wheat are now uncultivated. We grow beef and mutton, and we import our wheat from abroad. "But," somebody says, "it pays better." *Whom does it pay? Not* the consumer, most certainly! *(To be continued.)*

THE act of passing from the limitations and conditions of this transitory life into the solemnities and grandeurs of the future does not alter a man's character, though it may intensify it. It does not make him different from what he was, though it may make him more of what he was, whether its direction be good or bad.—*Rev. Dr. A. Maclaren.*

WEARY.

Yrs, the mother's arm is weary,
Where the baby's head has lain,
And the daily round of duty
Ceases, to begin again.
But if you your lives could fashion,
Or could alter at your will,
Would you choose the tired aching?
Or the empty arms and still?

Better noise and healthy clatter
Than an echo in the room,
Better floors beyond suspicion
Of the housemaid's brush and broom,
Than to have the nest all empty,
All the darling nestlings flown,
And to sit in idle quiet
But to sit and muse alone.

Angel forms that watch above us,
O'er our lives that vigil keep,
Often look in pitying wonder—
Wonder that we sit and weep;
Knowing that our Father gives us
Rarest treasures, richest joys,
Much of earth, and some of heaven—
In our baby girls and boys.

—*Elizabeth Schirmer.*

DRESS AND DRESSMAKING.

IT is quite established now by all the best dressmakers that dress improvers are things of the past. The long mantles of the day have no room for them, and the short ones mostly have sashes or other ornaments at the back that are all sufficient. The very utmost that is allowed for the purpose of preventing the skirt from falling limp, and dragging behind is a couple of pieces of stiff muslin, each doubled, and one four inches longer than the other. The top one is made into three, and the lower one into four box pleats, and they are sewn in under the gathers of the waist behind. This modification admits of the redingote style of dress, of which we give an illustration; it is very suitable for plain cloth, heather mixtures, tweeds, etc., and is frequently made with buttons all down one side of the skirt and loops on the other, the piece that is allowed to show underneath, being either of another material or trimmed by flat rows of narrow braid stitched on so as to show the stuff between. The plain bodice is made with revers and a vest braided like the panel, horizontally, and four buttons beneath the collar and three on each side of the waist, which are for ornament, not use, as the bodice hooks down on one side of the vest. The bonnet shows a new and fashionable shape, much made in écru felt and trimmed with brown velvet, and also entirely in brown, and entirely in crimson, and it is to be one of the leading spring shapes in straw and chip, and a kind of braid stiffened and made to do duty for the former.

Such redingotes as we show are frequently made in velveteen, and are very useful and suitable for that material, and those who have a new dress in February may be presumed to mean it to last them well on into the spring.

Our other illustration shows a very stylish yet easily made dress for a child. The model we saw was a kind of linsey in dark, and a lighter blue shot with the darker tint, and the sash, collar, and cuffs were made of a somewhat coarse, or

rather a thick cashmere of the darkest shade of blue. The rows of trimming seen in the front are simply lines of navy blue braid stitched on by the edges. It is perfection of a model for a little frock in Galatea stripes, with sash of plain twill, to be worn in warmer weather.

The stockings of the day are particularly good, and many of them, at quite moderate prices, have double heels and toes. A great many have a cross-barred pattern in crimson and amber made all over the top of the foot and up the front of the leg, and if these parts drop into holes, as they often do under the influence of buttoned boots and shoes, the darns do not show much. These stockings are neat, though they look trim and bright.

The old-fashioned kind of kid gloves are returning to favour and taking the place of suéde. This is welcome news for the economical, for no kind of *best* glove, ever looked so well or wore so long, and very good ones are to be had now, as they were of old, at half-a-crown a pair in four-button length.

Gimp made of braid, and also of a kind of satin cording, is being made up in large quantities for trimmings, and it often takes the place of braiding. Plain black or brown braid is much used for young girls' frocks, put on with the needle in this way—888. Every needlewoman will understand from this how to do it, and in this form it is very popular in the highest circles.

French people, in spite of all that is said about their follies, are in the main very sensible, and it is commonly said that no woman under the sun gets so much out of a dress allowance as a Parisienne. These ladies have decreed that for all occasions dresses are to be short, for walking, dancing, and dining. They are not, of course, to show the ankles, but even if they did the Frenchwoman's are always neat, but there is to be no suspicion of dragging, and trains are to be unknown.

The polonaise is as popular as ever, and when well draped it is charming. It is to be hoped that having returned to notice, it will not soon disappear again, for there is no form of dress so economical or so adaptable to change and variety.

Ribbons are much used, and the picot edge has entirely gone out. The majority are satin, with a very narrow plain edge or selvedge, but there are still striped ribbons in bands of shot or moiré, and very often a leaf is woven in the moiré stripe.

The useful matelassé cloth is again worn; indeed, it was too useful to be altogether lost sight of. The more elaborate patterns are, however, often outlined with a thread of colour, and where this is chosen it ought to harmonise with the rest of the dress. A very good judge declares that in the main we have gone back to the fashions of fifty years ago, and considering that the latest idea is a small leg of mutton sleeve, it is not very far from the truth.

Scotch tweed is very much used for wrap cloaks; it cannot by any means be made to look smart, but is very useful, and as it was popular many years ago for the same purpose, its reappearance is an example of the "survival of the fittest." It is also probable that the red Connemara cloaks will be worn this winter.

A fashion that will commend itself to the economical who have to put their best foot foremost and make a certain amount of appearance, is to have literally a coat of something like a gentleman's dress coat, but with elbow sleeves made of brocade or of elaborately braided vicuna or cashmere. This may be worn with a black or almost any coloured silk skirt, with a full vest of white silk or muslin or black lace, and forms a very nice evening or dinner dress.

The colours most combined with black by the leading dressmakers are apple green (which goes beautifully with black lace), lemon colour, old gold, and pale coral. Grey cloths are combined or mixed with gold, flax blue and old pink. A dark green is very effectively relieved with apricot, and violet goes well with silver grey. All these hints will be found valuable by those who are there own milliners, or who try to make one good dress out of two half-worn ones, or even study harmony when brightening their ordinary costume by means of a bow or two of ribbon.

Green as a fashionable colour holds its own quite, and the shades of it are very numerous. Chartreuse is a very useful tint, and emerald has its admirers. But women must exercise their common sense in wearing it, for emerald is not by any means a fit colour for the sallow, and the blonde must beware of any shades but myrtle and chartreuse. Taken all round few colours are more becoming than navy blue, and the robin-redbreast livery—brown relieved with just a touch of red for dark, dull winter days. A darkish cardinal has been a good deal worn this season, and if tenderly used can be kept on into spring weather with a fawn or grey jacket, such as are made in stockingnette cloth at such moderate prices, or with a fur cape, that good friend of nine months in most years, which is still handy on damp or chilly summer evenings. These are just now to be had in seal-skin at moderate prices, and they are simply invaluable.

The petticoats that are being worn this season are nearly all made of some striped material, and some of them are much trimmed with lace and ribbon; these are scarcely however suitable for ordinary wear. Flannel petticoats are frequently made with a deep flounce which improves the set of the dress at the bottom.